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Nadia, the Russian Spy; OR, THE BROTHERS OF THE STARRY CROSS.

BY CAPT. FREDERICK WHITTAKER,

Author of "The Red Rajah," "Double-Death," "The Rock Rider," "The Sea Cat," etc., etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

THE COSSACK CAPTAIN.

At the edge of the Eastern Steppe commences a gentle slope, which continues for hundreds of miles in a circle, and forms a vast bowl, in the center of which lies the lonely Sea of Aral, separated from its sister Caspian only by the plainer of Ust Urt.

On the eastern rim of this bowl is a crack, and through the crack runs the Syr Daria River.

And the Syr Daria marks the Russian frontier.

Here, on the day when our story opens, might be seen a spectacle peculiar to Russia—fort, camp and church united in one, and all guarded by the faithful Cossack.

The fort stood on a little knoll near the river, commanding with its guns, miles and miles of desolate plain. Below it lay the camp of the Cossack, and in the midst of the camp rose the green dome and golden cross of the church.

No camp of frail tents is that of the Cossack, but a village of neat, warmly-thatched cottages with yellow-painted walls; well-kept gardens around each; the whole as large as many a populous town.

Where the steppe to the north is still covered with snow, the southerly slope of Syr Daria Plain is already waking up to spring; and there are dark patches among the white fields, which grow more and more frequent, till a hundred miles further bring you to the plains of Turkestan.

The bell of the little church was tolling for the end of mass, and a small patrol of Cossacks stood by their horses, when a mounted officer rode slowly out of the fort hard-by, shortly after followed by the glittering figure of General Grodinsky, the commander of Fort Peroff.

The General was in full uniform, with all his orders on, and cut a far more splendid figure than his companion, and yet it was observable that he treated the latter with marked respect. The person in question dressed in the simple uniform of an officer of Cossacks, and yet there was a certain nameless air about him that implied one of distinction.

"I am much obliged for your offer of help, General," he said, quietly, as the other concluded a string of Russian compliments; "but I have determined to do these things for myself, without any assistance. The sergeant of the party knows the way, I presume."

"I shall have the honor of sending the best warrior of the camp with your—" began the General.

The young officer raised his hand gently.

"Nothing but captain," he said. "I am Captain Blank, of the Cossacks of the guard, on duty here, that is all, General. Does the sergeant know the way to the next post?"

"He does, captain," said the General, soberly.

"Then farewell," said Captain Blank.

As he spoke he waved his hand and shook his rein. His steed sprang forward with a bound, and carried him to the gate of the camp. As he appeared there, a gruff voice within shouted:

"Mount!"

Then twelve Cossacks leaped on their horses like a flash, and a sergeant with a tremendous broadsword out of the gate and saluted Captain Blank, saying:

"We gladly obey your honor."

Captain Blank looked at the grim sergeant and his wild-appearing escort with an amused smile. Then he kindly returned the salute, and said the other:

"What is thy name, friend?"

"Sergeant Potapoff, at your honor's service,"

said the other.

"Then follow me, Potapoff, and the rest of you, my children."

And the young officer started at a gallop, followed by the hard-riding Cossacks at the same speed, and turned toward the open steppe to the north.

In a very short time they had passed the



"My lord, ride back whence you came, and leave me here!"

camp, ridden over the edge of the vast bowl on whose rim the fort was built, and were alone in the steppe, for the flag-staff of the fort was the only thing that remained visible to mark the Russian post, and that was fast disappearing under the land.

For some time Captain Blank rode silently on, the frozen snow crackling under the roughed shoes of his horse, keeping a steady course to the north-east. The sky that had been bright in the Aral valley, was fast growing gray, and gathering into dark clouds to the north, and a cold, damp wind came whistling past their ears.

Captain Blank slackened his pace, unstrapped his cloak and wrapped himself in it. Then he beckoned to Potapoff to come up alongside.

"What does that cloud mean, friend?"

"The last snow, your honor, and 'tis ever the worst."

"Can we go through, think you, to the next post, if it comes on?"

Potapoff wrinkled up his weather-beaten face and looked ahead.

The dark cloud was coming toward them very rapidly.

"We can, your honor," he said, gravely, "but—"

"But you think I am not able to face the same hardships," said the young captain, good-humoredly. "Well, Potapoff, you shall see. How long will it last, think you?"

"Three long days," said the old sergeant, gravely; "but your honor must know 'tis no

* The Emperor Paul died in Napoleon's time, leaving four sons, Alexander, Constantine, Nicholas and Michael. Alexander I succeeded him, beloved by all as the "White Czar." At Alexander's death the Grand Duke Constantine gave up the succession to Nicholas, whose harsh and cruel reign gained him the appellation of the "Black Czar." The present Emperor, Alexander II, son of Nicholas, inherits the amiable disposition and beloved title of his uncle. He is also known as the "White Czar." The Emperor Paul was generally thought to be a madman, and was assassinated.

The captain looked at the sergeant through the snow-flakes with a strange expression.

"You talk like a bold man, sergeant."

"I am a free Don Cossack," was the simple reply.

Some sort of sudden irritability seemed to seize Captain Blank, for he struck spurs into his horse and rode into the teeth of the storm at full speed, followed by the hardy Cossacks.

On through gathering snow-drifts he dashed, without any seeming object, facing the cutting storm as if he rejoiced in it, till the distant howling of a pack of wolves on the steppe came past his ears, borne on the wings of the north wind.

Then he beckoned Potapoff alongside once more.

"What are those wolves howling about?" he asked, as he listened to the approaching cry. "Is there game on the steppe?"

Potapoff shook his head. They could hardly hear each other for the noise of the storm, as he shouted back:

"Not a head, your honor. It must be some travelers."

"Then come on, in God's name. He sent us here," cried Captain Blank, in answer.

And away went the Cossack patriot toward the distant wolves, led by mysterious Captain Blank.

a thing."

"As an officer and a gentleman, if you wish to earn the undying gratitude of a broken-hearted woman, do not detain me," she cried, passionately. "Oh, you do not know what hangs upon my journey, sir, or you would not stop me. I can not, I will not go with you to that fort, alive."

The young officer looked gravely at her. Wildly as the storm swept past them, there was something in this frail, beautiful girl that seemed to defy all its rage, and to be totally devoid of fear, even after her late escape from instant death by such a hair's breadth.

"Gracious lady," said Captain Blank, "if I leave you here in the snow, you will infallibly be buried alive and frozen to death. Do you know that?"

Then, for the first time, she started up, and looked around as if bewildered, murmuring:

"The sledge—where is Demetri?"

"The sledge has been carried away by your frightened horses," said the officer, kindly; "and ere this, my Cossacks have found and stopped it. Your only chance of reaching it is to go with me."

"And what then?" asked the lady, eagerly; "may I pursue my way? Will you not stop me?"

"I fear it will be my duty to take you to the fort," said the captain, in a grave tone, "unless you have a regular passport."

"I have none," said the lady, frankly, but in a despairing tone; "but oh, sir, something in

your face that tells me I can hope for reason and pity from you. On my journey hang life, liberty, and happiness, for one who—"

"Enough," interrupted the officer, gently raising his hand as if to deprecate further speech; "I seek not to know your secrets. As an officer of the czar, it is my duty to take you to Fort Perofsky; as a knight of the Cross, I must help a woman. Tell me only this, do you love Russia? Are you true to the czar?"

"God knoweth that I am," she said, clasping her hands. "Oh, sir, if you knew all—"

"I would know nothing but this," he said, gravely; "you are a lady and in distress. I dare not leave you to perish. Give me your hand."

He extended his own as he spoke. With singular activity the lady placed one foot on his stirrup, and sprang up to the horse's croup.

"We have lost time enough," said Captain Blank. "Now we must ride to save our lives."

A way went the fiery Ukraine stallion down the wind at a rapid pace, and the storm seemed to abate as he sailed before it. Captain and lady held their peace as they plunged along through the rapidly-deepening snow, which already was up to the fetlocks of the steed.

They galloped on in silence, mile after mile, their only guide the wind, which blew directly toward Fort Perofsky.

After a long ride, the horse began to neigh loudly, and the call was answered some distance ahead.

"My Cossacks and the sledge," was the only commentary of Captain Blank.

He felt the figure of his companion tremble all over as he spoke, and the clasp of her arms loosened round his waist, but she said nothing.

Presently a gray, plunging ghost of a horseman powdered with snow loomed up ahead; and grim sergeant Potapoff came riding up, saluting as if nothing had happened.

"Where is the sledge?" asked the captain, as Potapoff wheeled and rode alongside in silence.

Through the howling storm the Cossack shouted back:

"Halted, a ver' ahead, gracious captain. We could not kill off the wolves and stop it before."

"Call off your party, and we will go back to camp," said the captain. "The sledge will proceed alone."

He felt a close pressure of the lady's arms as he spoke, and Potapoff galloped away into the mist of snow-flakes, while the mysterious captain slackened his pace, and rode at a canter.

"Gracious lady," he said, to his fair partner, "I am taking a risk for your sake not other man in Russia would take. You are about to cross the frontier, and I know what you are, a political prisoner. Nay, fear not, I will not betray you, for your face tells me you do not lie! To you I say, do not make me repent this."

The tones of his voice were grave and solemn, and he turned and looked in his companion's face. The dark eyes met his own blue ones with perfect frankness, and they were full of tears, as she answered:

"My lord, you shall not repent it, and Russia shall not."

"I hope not," he said, gravely; "and now tell me frankly, are you not afraid to face this storm alone? Remember that our post is the only human habitation for many hundred miles."

"My lord," said the lady, proudly, "you say you know me. If you do, you know that a Russian noble never feared to be alone with God."

As she spoke, they discerned the dim outline of the sledge through the driving snow, and there on the box sat the man she had called Demetri, waiting, while the party of Cossacks were drawn up at some distance off. The captain pulled up by the sledge, and the lady jumped off and buried herself among the furs, without a word. Then she turned to the strange officer without speaking, and kissed her hand. He raised his cap in a courteous salute, Demetri cracked his whip, and away went the sledge to the south, lost in the storm in a moment.

Captain Blank rode slowly toward the fort, as if in deep thought. Ere long he beckoned to Potapoff, and asked:

"Sergeant, what lies in the way yonder sledge is going?"

"The open steppe, your honor. They will be lost to a certainty unless—"

"Unless what?"

"Unless they come across the Middle Horde of the Tartars, and then God help them, for the heathen will sell them for slaves to the Khan of Khiva."

CHAPTER III.

THE MINISTER OF POLICE.

In a large chamber in the Winter Palace at St. Petersburg stood a handsome officer of courtly presence, dressed in the dark-green uniform of a Major-General, his breast covered with crosses, while under his arm was a large portfolio.

The handsome dark face of this officer, with a closely-trimmed black mustache, had yet a stealthy and cunning look about it that was not altogether agreeable. He stood with his head bent, smiling obsequiously before a very tall, heavily-built man, in the uniform of an officer of cuirassiers, who sat by a table on which reposed his helmet and sword, an expression of pride and irritation on his haughty features.

"Your majesty commanded me to watch at all times, and I have done so," said the obsequious General. "My spies are in every regiment and garrison from Lapland to Perofsky, and—"

"Enough, enough, General," said the czar, harshly. "Your trumpet is a loud one, but you blow it too often. Can you tell me at this minute what they are saying about the declaration of war in Moscow?"

The General smiled, blandly, and opened his portfolio, from which he produced a paper, saying:

"Your majesty has only to command to be obeyed. Here is the report of Inspector Kar-doff, about the language used in the tea-gardens, by shop-keepers, serfs, and all the rest. The prevailing sentiment was loyalty to the czar, and death to the Turk."

The czar took the paper, and glanced over it carelessly.

"Of course," he said, sullenly; "that's the old story. I see the bright side of the picture only. General Gorloff, *where is the dark side?* What do the Old Believers say?"

The czar had a cold, cruel eye, and he fixed it sternly on the Minister of Police. Gorloff bowed and smiled deprecatingly, as he said:

"I did not wish to anger your majesty with the sayings of that scum. Here is the report of Inspector Boris. He pretends to be an Old Believer, and has access to all their secrets save one. That, your majesty, I will frankly own has baffled our best men."

"And what is that?" asked the czar, coldly, as he took the paper handed by the minister.

"It is the secret of the order of Knights called Brothers of the Starry Cross," said Gorloff, in a low tone. "One of my men became a

member, but three days after he was found dead, with a cross-cut over his cleft heart. He never reported."

The czar made no answer, but perused the paper he held, in silence. As he read, a dark frown gathered on his brow, and when he had finished, he turned to Gorloff.

"General," he said, with a face outwardly calm, but his eyes glaring fearfully, "I am glad I say this report. These Old Believers have been a thorn in my side all these years, but I'll root them out if it costs me my crown. So they presume to criticize my measures, and call the Holy Orthodox Church schismatic, do they? Let them look to themselves. Prince Gallitzin is their chief. Watch him closely. If one word escapes him, even if it be in the scuttle of his chamber, let me know at once, if that word be treasonable."

Gorloff rubbed his hands, and smiled.

"The Princess Gallitzin is in my way, sire."

Nicholas smiled back an answer.

"Gorloff, you are a treasure. I hate that man. Has he spoken?"

"Nothing but this, your majesty. Prince Dolgoronck told him one day that he had fallen under your majesty's displeasure, and might be degraded. Gallitzin, before a large company, said: Tell the czar he can not degrade me, for my ancestors were grand dukes in Russia, when the Romanoffs were counts of Holstein Gottorp! And the company laughed, for they were all old Boyars."

The emperor's face turned purple as he listened, and he hoarsely whispered:

"He shall go to the mines for that, by the soul of Peter."

Gorloff smiled again, his usual bland, insinuating smile, as he said, in a low tone:

"It might not be polite at present, sire. Prince Gallitzin is the head of the young Russian party, to which three-fourths of the high officials belong. This war with the army, and if the prince were once in Siberia, he might do more mischief than even here."

The czar started, and looked at the minister earnestly. There was a hidden meaning in the other's words; he had not fully fathomed, but he felt vaguely apprehensive.

"What do you mean?" he asked. "Speak without fear."

Gorloff straightened up, and looked his master in the face.

"Simply this, your majesty. There are five prisoners in Siberia, now, for every soldier, and all they need is a leader. This morning I received intelligence that a female crossed the border by Fort Perofsky into the Independent Steppe, and that that female was mischievous than even here."

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The czar started, and looked at the minister again.

"Well, well, how did she get out? What was Grodinsky doing to let her go?" he asked, in a low voice.

The General was in the fort, sire; a terrible storm was raging; a Cossack patrol was out and came in, driven by the storm. The one man babbled in his drink that their new captain had let a prisoner escape across the border; and at the same time, I received notice that one Anna Bronk had disappeared from Tchobisk. Putting things together, I found that Anna Bronk and the escaped prisoner were the same. Your majesty knows who is Anna Bronk."

The czar listened in silence with great attention. Then he said:

"And the officer who let her escape. Is he alive? Who is he?"

"Captain Blank, your majesty."

"Captain Blank," said the czar, slowly; "that is no name. Who is Captain Blank?"

General Gorloff smiled again, and opened his portfolio.

"Here, your majesty," he said, "is a list, as near as my men can find out, of avowed Brothers of the Starry Cross. Captain Blank is set down as a Grand Commander."

The emperor rose to his feet and faced General Gorloff, with a lurid light in his eye, that bold men were wont to quail under.

"I asked you, Gorloff, who is this captain who dares to let prisoners cross my borders unchecked. You answer by telling me what he is—an enemy of mine. Do you mean to say that my minister of police does not know?"

Gorloff turned pale under his master's anger, and stammered:

"Gracious sire, General Grodinsky himself did not know. This captain brought an order in your majesty's own handwriting, directing all officers on the frontier to obey him as if he were your own self. The order was couched in the same words as that given by your majesty to his imperial highness, the Czarevitch."

"To my son!" echoed the emperor, astounded.

"It was a duplicate, your majesty: how obtained, no one knows. The Grand Duke Alexander arrived at the fort three days after Captain Blank left, and Grodinsky and he had a fine laugh about the impostor. It seems that Grodinsky took him for the grand duke himself."

The czar has been listening impatiently. Now he interrupted.

"You are my minister of police. A prisoner has escaped, whose mission means death to Russia. A traitor was allowed to escape. I want that traitor found. I give you one year to bring to me the woman, one month for the man. If you fail, look to your head. I have spoken."

General Gorloff saw his master was in grim earnest.

"Your majesty," he said, quietly, "there is one man in your dominions who can solve this mystery to-day."

"Who is that?" asked the czar, scornfully.

At that moment a knock at the door was followed by the voice of the orderly announcing, as if answering the question:

"His imperial highness, the Czarevitch."

(To be continued.)

The Origin of the Dollar Mark.—The origin of the dollar mark is disputed. Most old writers claim that the \$ came from the old Spanish pillar dollar, which bore on its reverse the two "pillars of Hercules," the ancient name of the opposite promontories at the Straits of Gibraltar. The parallel lines in it (thus \$) stand, according to this explanation, for the two pillars, and they are bound together (thus \$) with a scroll. Many modern writers claim, that as the Spanish dollar was a piece of eight reals, "8 R" being once stamped on it, and it was then called a "piece of eight," that the figure 8, with a line drawn through it, as characters were generally formed, produced the sign of the dollar. It was not called a dollar, but a "piece of eight."

The name itself was born in Germany, and, from the fact that the first piece of this character was coined in the Valley of St. Joachim, in Bohemia, in the year 1815, it was called Joachim's thaler, the last half of this word being pronounced (and often written) dollar.

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The czar made no answer, but perused the paper he held,

"What are these,
So wretched and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on?"

—SHAKSPEARE.

MRS. LAYWORTH'S apartments were in a secluded portion of the commodious house, between a double-angle, or recessed wall overgrown with dense vines—where there pervaded a gloomy atmosphere by day, and a grave-like solitude by night.

She and her daughter were sitting at a large round table covered with a faintly-wrought cover of green; and a giant lamp, burning beneath its mellow shade, cast a wavering light around.

They were awaiting Ytol. When the young governess entered, she paused near the door, and silently returned the searching gaze with which the two regarded her.

"You sent for me, Mrs. Layworth?"

"Yes. Advance, please, and be seated. We wish to talk with you."

When Ytol had appropriated a chair:

"You look unwell, Miss Lyn."

"I am not well, madam."

"We desire to touch upon the cause."

"You are very kind. A mere indisposition, madam; I shall be better by to-morrow."

"She is telling a falsehood," thought Ione, who was watching her keenly.

"I want you to tell us, Miss Lyn, what it is that is disturbing your peace of mind. You can not conceal it from us; something is worrying you."

Ytol started, scarce visibly, and the blue eyes raised. The question was repeated.

"If I tell you, madam—"

"Then I shall be satisfied. So, you do admit that there is a mystery connected with you?"

"Yes. Mrs. Layworth," she confessed, subduedly.

"You must explain it to us. First, answer me this: is your true name 'Lyn'?"

Again she started, again her glance fell; her head bowed, and she answered, lowly:

"It is not."

"Ah!" Ione touched her mother with her foot beneath the table.

"Then, what is it?"

"Oh, Mrs. Layworth!" she cried, looking pleadingly at her questioner, "promise me that I shall not be sent away; promise that you will not drive me from Wilde Manor when you learn what an unfortunate girl I am. Do not shun me and withdraw your protection—I need it, oh! so sorely; and I will tell you all."

"Proceed," with an assenting inclination of the head.

Once more Ytol revealed her brief, sad history—poured out the story of her miserable lot, and the entanglements which fate had woven, and seemed even still weaving in her unhappy existence.

Her listeners were strangely interested. Ione, markedly silent throughout, sat like a statue, deeply attentive.

"After all," reminded Mrs. Layworth, "you have not told me your real name."

"Because I do not know what it is. Herbert Lyn gave me his name; I was never called by any other. Yet—stay," remembering the words of her masked tormentor on that fearful night, "I recollect now—once, by the enemies I told you—"

"They who are haunting you?"

"Yes. By them I was called 'Ytol Dufour'!"

"H—h! Ione, do you hear? She was called 'Dufour'!"

"Just as we suspcioned, mother," observed Ione, quietly. "I think this is beginning to develop."

While they conversed, they dreamed not that there was another party to this interview. An ugly face peered in at the open window, from the thick foliage of a tree whose branches grew close to the sill. A pair of glowing, gleaming, scintillating eyes were fastened, like the orbs of a serpent, on Ytol.

"Ytol," Mrs. Layworth spoke rapidly, "we have reason to believe that we know you. Unless we are greatly mistaken, your father's name was Silas Dufour, and your mother was called Nora."

Ytol did not answer. Surprise was molded in her features, for these were the names mentioned by the masked figure who was her captor on the yacht. What could Mrs. Layworth know of her father and mother, if these were they?"

"You say you never saw your mother?"

"Never, I guess; for I do not remember her."

"Perhaps if you saw her you would know."

"If I saw her?" repeated Ytol.

"Yes. If I were to show you her picture, as she looked in my infant days?"

"Oh, Mrs. Layworth! can it be possible? Did you know my mother? Can you tell me anything of her, and who I am?" There was a beseching eagerness in her tone, her veins thrilled with a strangely-born hope that she might hear something to prove her identity and lift her up from the dark shadows which surrounded her origin.

"I think—ay, I am sure I knew her well." The eyes of the speaker flashed and glittered, and bent with a piercing sternness upon the young girl. She leaned slightly forward; the hand grasped and crushed the cloth of the table.

The look, the force of speech awed Ytol. Those black, dazzling orbs were penetrating to her soul; to read the tremors of her heart, and discern the nervous feeling which seized her.

"Mrs. Layworth, what do you know of my mother?" she gasped, with a short breath.

"I know that I hated her! I know that she robbed me of what I, at one time, held most dear on earth!—though now, I half forgive it, for the man she wedded, and whom I loved, proved to be a worthless drunkard. The same blood that runs in her veins, runs in mine. When I married, she was the cause of my husband deserting me—my first husband, and the father of Ione; I was wedded and widowed twice. You are the child of Nora Dame. Look! Here is your mother!"

She arose suddenly, and advanced to the vailed picture.

Tearing aside the crepe:

"See! Have you any recollection of her now?"

An indescribable sensation crept into Ytol's veins. The beautiful portrait struck a mysterious chord in her breast; her thoughts went back, back on lightning wings in an effort to conjure up the past associations that linked the likeness in her mind.

Through the delighted corridor of memory, with its countless changes, like paintings on the wall of years—back, back, till the brain paused, acting with its strain. And a dim vision of that face arose in a dream of love's sunshine, caressing her fondly, and lips whispering soft syllables in her baby ears.

It was indistinct—oh, how flickering it came! yet the feeling was there, the weird and halied influence, the music of low lullabies that soothed to sweet repose.

She was governed by—she knew not what; mechanically she sank from the chain to the floor, on her knees.

Her hands clasped with a quick motion; her eyes turned yearningly on the picture; one long, struggling breath, and then:

"My mother!" rang tremulously forth. "Oh, I know it must be my mother—something tells me it must be so. My heart! my heart! Mother!—dear! dear mother! is it you?"

—SHAKSPEARE.

The moaning voice was not her own, it seemed as if another being spoke. She was like one in a trance; she knelt there, oblivious to all, every thing, save the half-eccentric, half-agonizing contemplation of what she saw.

"Mother, it is she!" cried Ione, starting up.

"We have found the missing heir!"

"And she is my—"

At that instant they were interrupted by a strange cry, like the short, sharp yell of a snarling dog, followed by a crash of glass—and the long curtains at the windows were dashed in a mass from the cornice.

A figure bounded in upon the floor, a loathsome gorilla-like object, ill-shaped and frightful, and from whose mouth issued a chattering, gurgling sound.

"Catijo, the Dwarf!"

Mrs. Layworth shrank, and was transfixed before the apparition; every vestige of color fled from her cheeks; like a staring corpse she stood against the wall, with one hand outstretched on the papered surface. Not alone her horror at being confronted by a human so hideous; but beneath the guise of deformity and Satanic mien, she discovered something.

"I want you to tell us, Miss Lyn, what it is that is disturbing your peace of mind. You can not conceal it from us; something is worrying you."

Ytol started, scarce visibly, and the blue eyes raised. The question was repeated.

"If I tell you, madam—"

"Then I shall be satisfied. So, you do admit that there is a mystery connected with you?"

"Yes. Mrs. Layworth," she confessed, subduedly.

"You must explain it to us. First, answer me this: is your true name 'Lyn'?"

Again she started, again her glance fell; her head bowed, and she answered, lowly:

"It is not."

"Ah!" Ione touched her mother with her foot beneath the table.

"Then, what is it?"

"Oh, Mrs. Layworth!" she cried, looking pleadingly at her questioner, "promise me that I shall not be sent away; promise that you will not drive me from Wilde Manor when you learn what an unfortunate girl I am. Do not shun me and withdraw your protection—I need it, oh! so sorely; and I will tell you all."

"Proceed," with an assenting inclination of the head.

Once more Ytol revealed her brief, sad history—poured out the story of her miserable lot, and the entanglements which fate had woven, and seemed even still weaving in her unhappy existence.

Her listeners were strangely interested. Ione, markedly silent throughout, sat like a statue, deeply attentive.

"After all," reminded Mrs. Layworth, "you have not told me your real name."

"Because I do not know what it is. Herbert Lyn gave me his name; I was never called by any other. Yet—stay," remembering the words of her masked tormentor on that fearful night, "I recollect now—once, by the enemies I told you—"

"They who are haunting you?"

"Yes. By them I was called 'Ytol Dufour'!"

"H—h! Ione, do you hear? She was called 'Dufour'!"

"Just as we suspcioned, mother," observed Ione, quietly. "I think this is beginning to develop."

While they conversed, they dreamed not that there was another party to this interview. An ugly face peered in at the open window, from the thick foliage of a tree whose branches grew close to the sill. A pair of glowing, gleaming, scintillating eyes were fastened, like the orbs of a serpent, on Ytol.

"Ytol," Mrs. Layworth spoke rapidly, "we have reason to believe that we know you. Unless we are greatly mistaken, your father's name was Silas Dufour, and your mother was called Nora."

Ytol did not answer. Surprise was molded in her features, for these were the names mentioned by the masked figure who was her captor on the yacht. What could Mrs. Layworth know of her father and mother, if these were they?"

"You say you never saw your mother?"

"Never, I guess; for I do not remember her."

"Perhaps if you saw her you would know."

"If I saw her?" repeated Ytol.

"Yes. If I were to show you her picture, as she looked in my infant days?"

"Oh, Mrs. Layworth! can it be possible? Did you know my mother? Can you tell me anything of her, and who I am?" There was a beseching eagerness in her tone, her veins thrilled with a strangely-born hope that she might hear something to prove her identity and lift her up from the dark shadows which surrounded her origin.

"I think—ay, I am sure I knew her well." The eyes of the speaker flashed and glittered, and bent with a piercing sternness upon the young girl. She leaned slightly forward; the hand grasped and crushed the cloth of the table.

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the oars, and dropped blades in the water, and they are yet beyond pistol range!

"Oh, God! are they to get away—those guilty wretches?"

"Ha! Something stays them! God is not for them; the oar-blades rise and fall, but the boat moves not! Her keel is upon coral; her bilge resting upon its rough projections. Their weight pressing down holds her fast, and the oar-stroke is idle."

They had not calculated on this obstruction, which proves the turning point of their fate.

No use leaping out now, and lightening the boat, to get her again afloat. Too late for that or any other scheme for escape. There remains only the alternative of resistance, which means death, or surrender, that may seem to promise the same. De Lara would resist, and die; so, also, Rocus. But the other two are against it, instinctively clinging to whatever chance of life may be left them.

The coward, Calderon, cuts short the uncertainty by rising erect, stretching forth his arms in a piteous appeal for mercy.

In an instant after they are surrounded, the boat grasped by the gunwale, and dragged back to the shore; the indignant rescuers with difficulty being restrained from shooting and treading them down upon the thwarts.

They would do this were Grunnet dead. Fortunately, they find him alive, and little hurt, a bullet having struck his skull, creasing and only stunning him. Assured of his safety, they pull the four pirates out of the boat, and, after disarming, take them to the cave, for a time to be their prison.

Not for long. There is a Judge present before whom trials are short, and sentences quickly followed by execution. It is the celebrated Justice Lynch.

Represented by a stalwart digger—all the others acting as jury—the trial is speedily brought to a termination. For the four Californians the verdict is guilty, the sentence death or banishment.

An exception is made in the case of Striker and Davis. The Sydney Ducks receive conditional pardon, on promise of better behavior throughout all future time. This they obtain by the intercession of Harry Blew, in accordance with the hint given on their last leaving them.

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THE SATURDAY STAR JOURNAL.

Saturday Journal

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We have placed in the compositors' hands, and shall give, in an early number of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, the opening chapters of

WILNA WYLDE,
The Doctor's Ward,

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,
AUTHOR OF "STRANGELY WED," "THE CROOKED WIFE,"
"CORAL AND RUBY," ETC., ETC.

Another very strong, singular and brilliant production from this eminent contributor's pen. It is a tale of heart and soul struggle—of a young life that is shadowed at every step, but sustained by the strength of a sublime purity and hope; of a man's struggle with his own heart; of a father's deep devotion, and a husband's grand trustfulness; and unfolds, chapter by chapter, a life-drama so real that the reader is fascinated as by a spell. It is in Mrs. Burton's happiest, most confident vein, and gives to readers of romance that rarest of all treats—a deeply satisfying story.

Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—The old saying, *poeta nascitur non fit*, is so true that, to deny its binding force seems like a denial of one of the ten commandments. But, in this day of changes, when every scholar and man of science is an iconoclast, and every thing is put into the crucible of fact to be retested, we are safe from excommunication when we say poets are like all other people, with just as many virtues and vices and just as much need of study and cultivation as those not born with the faculty of poetic thought and expression.

The idea that, because a person is born with this faculty, he is something exceptional, in an intellectual way, is very absurd. To that idea is owing the conceit and arrogance of the rhymer, and the egoism and self-assumption of the man who writes in epics. This faculty is so widespread in its dissemination that every village has its rivals in the arena of rhyme, and every editor's office is flooded with the Apollonian ventures; and every editor learns, after a long experience as a manuscript reader, that these ventures are usually worthless in proportion to their writers' want of education.

If a writer shows his ignorance in his defective prose, he betrays, in his defective poetic expression, the measure of that ignorance; and though there may exist evidences of a natural gift for poetry and poetic forms of utterance, the absence of an intimate knowledge of words, of rhetorical precision in expression, of the music and power of syllables, of correct measure and rhythm—the presence of all of which are poetic necessities—indicates failure.

The true poet may, and, indeed, must write from the heart; must be prompted by feeling and emotion; must see things with his own powers; but, to express himself properly and with precision, a knowledge of the art of expression is just as essential as the different parts of an engine are essential to develop the powers of steam, or soil, light and moisture, are essential to the development of the plant.

Those who write verses for the press must not infer that, because their contributions are used, therefore they are good and perfect. Thousands of poems see the light of print which are merely good in intent, and they are used first, because they embody either a proper sentiment or a fresh thought; and second, because the editor can get nothing better.

Judged by the long-established canons of the poetic art, very few perfect poems are obtainable; not one in ten of those published will bear "scanning" and analysis; they are acceptable as a whole without being perfect in their parts; and are given place with that mental reservation which prisoners of war make in order to obtain a parole.

Like all other mental qualities there is gradual growth in the poetic faculty, as every one who writes verse will attest. What is done with labor and effort at first, after awhile comes with ease. Not only does practice in composition assist in developing the poetic powers but the study over thoughts and verbal forms is a splendid training, adding greatly to the mind's resources and vocabulary. Many who started out rudely and crudely now are writers of acknowledged merit and popularity—a clear result to be credited to study and ambition to excel; and a fact full of encouragement to that large army of aspirants who see discouragement in every rejection, or who grow despair over every criticism.

The Weekly Clarion, of Lapeer, Mich., canvassing the merits of popular papers, thus refers to our own:

"One of the brightest and most desirable story papers in the country, is the SATURDAY STAR JOURNAL. There is a crisp and spirited freshness and vigor in its columns, that commends it to public favor. The stories are by the best authors, profusely illustrated, and the paper is a model of the printer's skill."

Crisp and spirited freshness implies just that quality which distinguishes the young and vigorous writers whom it has been our pleasure and privilege to introduce to a wide popularity. They tell no "three-fold tales," nor talk, in stilted phrase, of lords and ladies, of rectors and squires—people they literally know nothing about.

We have, from the press of Smythe & Co., of Columbus, Ohio, a volume of poems, "Wild Thoughts in Rhyme," by Arnold Isler. The volume is beautifully printed, and is a fine specimen of book taste. The author is well known to our readers. He thus tells his personal history in his candid preface;

"An exile from my native hills of Switzerland at the early age of five years; a runaway and 'Street Arab' at nine; a soldier-boy in the 23d Ohio infantry at twelve; without a home, friends or means, I grew up untaught, unlettered. Knowing no art but the promptings of a wild, wayward nature, I rhymed, perhaps with reason, and because I had nothing else to do that I liked better."

Such histories, in this country, are common enough not to excite surprise. Some of our finest men came out of just such unpropitious begin-

nings. Talent, here, will assert itself, as a usual thing; and when we see it taking on the form which it assumes in Mr. Isler's case, it is particularly pleasant to contemplate. It gives to other boys such a good lesson that it becomes one of those living sermons whose application is worth a thousand fold more than a whole library of moral injunctions and warnings.

SERMONETTE.

II.
"If you've any thing to say,
True and needed, say or nay,
Say it."

WHEN a kind word will do so much toward aiding a timid brother or sister, and make his or her life-path pleasanter and the rough road the smoother, why on earth is it withheld? Is it such a grievous and unpardonable sin to give encouragement to another? If so, please count me a sinner in that respect, for I find myself committing that grievous fault often and often. The reason of it being *decease*? I want so much encouragement myself that, when I am so fortunate as to obtain a supply, I am only too willing to share it with others, you see. We haven't broken up the Golden Rule at our house and hidden it behind the barn door.

I've seen great grumpy creatures treat their fellow-beings about them as though they were no more than hogs. They'd as soon go about barefooted in the depth of winter as bestow a kind word on another. But they are not so chary of their *cross* words, let me tell you! They can scold and find fault enough to make up for any shortcomings in the other respect. Oh! I find it just like shaking such folks, and the only reason I don't do it is, perhaps, because I always keep a wide distance from them, for I find that to be the best and most peaceable way to get along.

Then there's a certain set of sanctimonious personages who frown down on the humorous departments of our weekly literature, just as though no one had any right to laugh, but must keep up one continual dismal howl, like a person with a jumping toothache.

It is in Mrs. Burton's happiest, most confident vein, and gives to readers of romance that rarest of all treats—a deeply satisfying story.

Giving advice, nowadays, is a somewhat ticklish sort of business, because everybody thinks he is the right person to give it. Such people won't take advice, and it's no use to give any of it to them. Now, I'll just tell you why advice is so seldom listened to. We preach too much—oh! you needn't point at me, for I know I apt to do the very same thing myself—we don't tell our friends, in a kindly spirit, what they ought and what they ought not to do; we interlard our speeches too much with sermonizing. We don't put ourselves in the same situations as those who seek our advice. We don't consider how we might act under the same temptations. Because we are free from crime, we can not see why others should not be, as well, and we scold them because they are not. It is easy enough for one to be true to himself and all mankind when he has no temptation to resist and no evil propensities to overcome.

I am very prone to read the answers to correspondents, and I think the editors are extremely kind to give so much needed advice; yet, at the same time, I wonder if those who ask that advice will profit by it?

I am very well aware that we, who use our pens for a livelihood, and make a specialty of studying lights and shades of character, don't get any too many thanks for our trouble. I can't answer for others, but as for myself, if those so-called friends leave me because I report what I learn, let them go—their friendship is not worth the having and I'm only too willing to have them take their departure.

But your true and staunch friend is not so foolish as to take offense where none is meant; he knows we are none of us faultless, and if the cap fits him, he puts it on. Of course the girls know I'm not perfection, for if I were, I shouldn't know so well how to aim at the foibles of others. When I want to think of them, I just take a peep at *EVE LAWLESS*.

BRIGHTEN HOME.

It is never the greater burdens of life which wear us down. It is the constant dropping which wears away the rock, and constant fretting will just as surely eat into any woman's heart and soul and life, for it is in the woman's kingdom that fretting is the recognized prerogative. There are a hundred daily harassing cares in the experience of a wife and mother which the husband never realizes, a hundred excuses for the discontent which too often springs up in our homes.

No matter whether fretting is calculated to help affairs in any way, it is such an easy resource that it grows to be a second habit before we are well aware. This question of making our homes bright can never be too much discussed, and no fundamental principle will be of more avail in the needed reformation than this—Don't fret.

Continent will grow into a constitutional disease unless promptly checked and carefully guarded against, but there are remedies and preventatives for the evil. Let the sunshine freely into your rooms. It will sweep the gloom out of your spirit as well as from the dingy corners. Give the fresh, sweet air free circulation through all your house. It is exhilarating, it invigorates the frame, and a healthy body is always the fit receptacle of a healthy mind. Cultivate cheerfulness; it is quite as easy and much more pleasant than the depression which throws a blue-vapour tint over the brightest surroundings. Bring the finer infusions into daily association. Study to refine the familiar atmosphere of common life. Attend to the little civilities which nowhere afford greater satisfaction than at the home table or home hearth.

Gather pleasant, graceful things about you, not necessarily costly things, but articles which for a small outlay will bring a great return of satisfaction. Hang pictures on your walls; engravings or chromos representing such subjects as may best suit your taste. They are inexpensive and will often bring as much pleasure as costly elaborations in oil by great artists. Choose bright, pretty patterns for your carpet, graceful forms for your furniture; the simplest parlor may be a gem of a home room with a two-ply on the floor, Nottingham curtains at the windows, and all other garnitures to correspond.

In this day of cheap literature no home need be without the library which will build itself up from week to week. Papers and magazines and a new choice book now and then are not the indispensable needs of our time; they are the cheapest and most enduring of precious recreations. Keep singing-birds if you like, if the little busy flocks which go patter through the house, and the chubby, mischievous fingers, leave you time to care for them.

Have at least a few growing plants. Vivid blooms and sweet fragrance will bring Paradise into a window-seat.

When you feel an inclination to fret, bury your face instead in some odorous cluster, then

look about at the cheerful, home-breathing rooms over which your loving care presides, and thank Heaven for the wisdom which has enabled you to cast your lines in pleasant places.

CONSISTENCY.

It is no wonder that the aphorism, "Consistency, thou art a jewel," should be so often quoted, for there have been but few more pertinent truisms. It fits the present age with such nicely that it appears as though it must have been written for it, and, from present appearance, it seems as if it will be applicable to future generations.

A man is not consistent if he expends hundreds of dollars for foreign missions, and gives nothing for home charities; if he prays for the better welfare of the poor and does nothing toward bettering their condition himself; if he talks about friendship and brotherly love, and treats his workmen and apprentices as slaves; if he calls himself a Christian and does not have a Christian spirit enough to aid others.

A woman is not consistent if she desires her to have more employment and more pay, yet does her own work and sewing herself, to save expense, when she can well afford to hire it done; if she goes from one house to another to tell how her neighbors leave their work undone, and does not attend to her own household; if she preaches economy in the culinary department and does not practice it in the clothing she wears; if she does not let her children go out when the day is fine, and will go to walk herself on wet, sloppy days in thin shoes that are by no means waterproof.

We are very apt to find fault with others for the very things we do ourselves; we are inclined to murmur when we have ill-health, and think it strange we can not be well, when we don't take any pains to procure good health we are wont to swallow a humbug pill, and quack medicine in preference to taking a good long walk and inhaling the pure, free air of Nature.

We think the plots of a story and the plot of a play may be inconsistent, yet there are more glaring inconsistencies all around us in real, actual life; men are pardoned for murders while a term of long imprisonment is given to a good man; we are wont to swallow a humbug pill, and quack medicine in preference to taking a good long walk and inhaling the pure, free air of Nature.

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He who is brought up with comfort and luxury, with examples of good and virtuous people before his eyes, is ten times more to blame for going wrong than the one who is surrounded on all sides by crime, whose very lessons have been those of vice, and who was born among the outcasts of humanity. Far better would it be for those who know what is right to aid those who are wrong, instead of censoring their evil ways with the bitterest words. Good deeds make good lives, and consistency is a jewel all should wear.

F. S. F.

Foolscap Papers.

My Reception in Constantinople.

It had been noised all over the city that I was expected that morning, and millions of Turks were down at the landing; but they were very much disappointed after seeing me, because they had imagined me to be some kind of a six-legged animal. However, they shouted and I joined in along with them, and threw up my hat, and it fell into the water. A salute of forty horse-pistols was fired from the fort, and twenty-five soldiers stood on their heads on the parapet, and one private was thrashed severely to make him yell more.

Presently a man came aboard and told me he was the Sultan, and would be glad to carry my carpet-sack, and umbrella, and watch, and, if I wouldn't object, my pocketbook; which I permitted him to take, fearing myself highly honored. But he soon disappeared, and I was informed that he was only an *insulting* thief, and that I had been sold under cost.

As I pocketed the insult, but none of the articles, the real Sultan came up and embraced me with kindly dignity, and said he was proud of the moment, etc.

I thanked him in the name of the united divisions of America, and inquired kindly how his folks were, and all about the little Sultans and Sultanesses, and how he found himself to-day, and how his appetite was, and said it was a nice day; and then we left the vessel by a gang-plank, richly covered with a strip of carpet, with fellows on either side holding last year's umbrellas over us; and we landed on the wharf amid such an outburst of popular excitement as no other great man was ever greeted with in this world, or the one before it.

Fire-crackers were discharged with terrific velocity; torpedoes thundered everywhere; horse-pistols shook the trembling earth, while twenty-five thousand people rushed up and begged me only to spit in their hats, which I began to do, but was obliged to hire a dozen substitutes.

Seven thousand came up and pleaded with me to have the goodness to kick them only once apiece, just once; they would be satisfied; that was all they would ask. Several hundred begged me on bended knees to just blow my nose on their coat tails and they would be willing to die contended, some hundreds of years from now.

The crowd was so dense and excited that the police had to chop an avenue through them to the sidewalk with axes; some four hundred lost their lives by this.

The Sultan took my arm and said we would be obliged to walk to the palace, as his only drag had some extra hauling to do that morning and couldn't come—there being no other transportation, not even a rail.

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TEN YEARS OLDER.

BY HAP HAZARD.

Oh! you little midget,
Sitting on my knee!
You're a little fidget,
One can plainly see!
How you dash about,
With all their delight!
How they flash and sparkle
Like the stars at night!
Wonder if this midget
Thus would let me hold her,
If the little fidget!
She were ten years older!
Oh! you little fairy,
Gleaming like a spark!
Weaving chaplets airy,
My stern brows to deck!
Whispering that you love me
With sweet naivete!
We can't make move thee,
Flitting swift away!
Wonder would this fairy
Be thus warm or colder,
(If the vixen airy!)
She were ten years older!

A Diplomatic Failure.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"I do wonder if she does love me?"

Away through the purpling shadows of that calm quiet evening Raymond Rostine looked, as though from such a quarter would come an answer to his earnest self-questioning.

"She's so pretty, with her liquid blue eyes and hair like molten sunshine, and such a slender figure as graceful as a witch-hazel! I do really wonder if she'll have me if I ask her?"

Evidently the subject was not easily settled to Mr. Rostine's mind, for a sudden exclamation arose to his lips as a light buggy dashed past his window, down toward the village.

"Confound that old fool! I'll bet five dollars he's going down to see Florrie again! and if he should win her."

He bit his cigar almost through at the thought.

"Effie Denver would hardly put up with old Crawford, though! he's so dounced ugly and straight-laced in his ideas. If she were a poor girl, now—so poor as myself, for instance—there'd be some reason for her taking the old miser; but so long as she's got plenty of money in her own right, I imagine she'll go in for youth and good looks, and style."

Mr. Rostine stretched his neck to catch a glimpse of himself in the glass over the low mantel-shelf; and the self-satisfied smile he gave, told plainer than language could have done that he did not regard himself as at all deficient in the three requisite characteristics.

"Yes, Miss Denver is a beauty, a perfect lady, an heiress—and—I think somewhat in love with me."

Then he leaned back in the chair and meditatively puffed away at his cigar.

"I'll do it—tomorrow, when I promised her I'd call and take her carriage-riding—got to borrow the money from Foster, too, to hire the team. I'll propose, so I will, to marry the charming heiress, and live in clover—Hello, Foster! you're just the imp I wanted to see. Lend me ten dollars, will you?"

"Another spree, eh?"

"Not this time, old boy. Didn't you know I was reformed? Going to propose to Miss Denver, the heiress, and—"

Foster uttered a long, low whistle, then drew in his lips in the most utter contempt.

"Miss Denver, boarding down at the Evans?"

"Exactly. That tall, ladylike girl who wears the pearl ear-rings, you know—Miss Effie Denver, the heiress?"

"Rostine, you're caught! Bless me, didn't you know it had all leaked out at last? how she is no heiress at all, only a school-teacher come down for her vacation?"

"I—what? Nonsense, though, Foster; I don't believe it. Why, I tell you she wears pearls."

"Pearls he—well, never mind. Only, if that's your game, you'll better be warned. Hold on, Rostine; I'll prove it to you, or my word goes for nothing. Get your hat and come down past Mrs. Evans'—this heiress of yours gives the girls music lessons to pay her board-bill. Maybe you'll believe your own eyes."

Raymond Rostine was looking wofully lugubrious as he took down his hat.

"Of course I'll believe my eyes, Foster," he said, sadly.

Sure enough, as the two young men sauntered slowly past Mrs. Evans' house, where the lace curtains afforded free survey of the lighted back parlor, were plainly heard the monotonous drumming of the piano, and at intervals Miss Effie Denver's voice in encouragement or correction.

Then the lesson came to an end, and they heard little Minnie Evans say, in tones of unbroken delight:

"Oh, Miss Denver, you are just the very nice teacher I ever had."

Foster nudged Rostine, and Rostine whispered:

"Never mind that ten dollars; I'm back to town—tomorrow."

Mr. Raymond Rostine had not exaggerated at all when he had mentally described Effie Denver.

She was pretty, and perhaps had never looked prettier than that cool September morning when she awaited Mr. Rostine's coming for the carriage-ride to Hadden Spring. She had dressed herself in a black grenadine, and wore heavy, dead-gold ornaments, and a glowing scarlet sash about her waist that matched in hue the heron's plume in her jaunty little hat. A scarlet and white plaid shawl lay near at hand to don on the way if the fresh breeze blew cooler than it then was.

She looked a little impatiently at her watch, and as she replaced it in her belt, glanced down the shady road.

The truth was, she was not a little vexed at this tardiness of her admirer, this handsome gentleman who rejoiced in the euphonious name of Raymond Rostine, and who had mentioned, so casually and matter-of-factly, his villa on the banks of the Hudson, which, unfortunately for his comfort, was undergoing repairs; hence the reason he was rusticking at Greenwood. Effie Denver, though a beauty and an heiress, was a thoroughly sensible girl, with a dash of romance about her that lent an air of irresistible grace and witchery to her personal charms.

And she had been dreaming very sweet dreams, as girls of nineteen will do, about this handsome-faced Raymond Rostine.

Now, why were not his horses and his carriage at the door? She felt vexed about it, and undecided whether to blame him for his tardiness or her watch for being stupidly fast.

"Mr. Rostine seems inclined to take his leisure this morning," she remarked to Mrs. Sevan, who was arranging a glass dish of gorged autumn flowers.

"Mr. Rostine?—why if I had known it was he you were waiting for, I might have told you I saw him take the early train while I was at the post-office."

"You did, Mrs. Sevan?" and Effie paled, then flushed, after a moment laughed.

"Well, it makes very little difference; I'll take a walk to see my little music pupils."

"Anybody would think you were obliged to teach those Evanses, Miss Denver. It's hardly the business for an heiress like you."

Effie laughed and fastened her gloves with a superb set of buttons and chains.

"It's a labor of love, Mrs. Sevan, and little Minnie openly congratulated me last night on being her best teacher."

"But all the folks'll think you are obliged to; they really will, Miss Denver. Why, I heard only this morning that Wallace Foster told Mr. Rostine you were only a music-teacher. The chambermaid heard him."

"So, here was the reason of her gallant lover's dereliction in duty, was it?"

Well, Effie was glad she had escaped him, and her heart was light as air as she walked through the village street.

"That was altogether a mistake, Raymond—you remember what I told you about Miss Denver down at Greensward last summer?"

"A mistake?" and Rostine felt qualmish at the sudden thought that occurred to him.

"Yes, about her being no heiress at all, and obliged to give music lessons. You see she is engaged to Frank Evans, and he told me how he fell in love with her giving friendly instruction to his sister's children; he counted her under the impression she was only such, and now, he'll marry a hundred thousand. Cute, ain't he?"

Rostine fairly choked with rage.

"So near, and yet so far!" had that same hundred thousand been to him!

Well, he cursed his own ill-luck, and he cursed Foster for his "meddling impudence," and—couldn't do any more.

you, there wouldn't have been any need of bringing you into my house. All that would be necessary would be to speak your name in the middle of this station. Why, the very sticks themselves that form the stockade would rise out of the ground to seize you, to say nothing of the men."

"For whom do you take me?" asked the stranger, in a hoarse voice.

"For the man for whose body, dead or alive, the settlers on the border would give more than they would for any other man that walks upon earth, be his skin white or red," replied Murdock.

The stranger glanced at him with sullen eyes.

"Be assured, however," continued the young man, "that I mean you no harm. On the contrary, I need your aid, and I'm willing to pay you well for it. Come, is it a bargain?"

"You know my name?" said the stranger, slowly, without replying to the question.

"Yes, you are—" and Murdock, bending over, whispered a name in the ear of the stranger. "Am I right?" he asked.

"Yes," said the stranger, sullenly. "But I can not understand how you penetrated my disguise."

"Particularly when it deceived Boone and a half a score of your deadly foes, who would be almost willing to give ten years of their lives to draw a bead on you at fair rifle range."

"That is possible," replied the other; "but the bullet is not yet run that will take my life."

"If I were to call out your name from that door, a long rope and a short shrift would save the bullet the trouble," said Murdock.

The stranger winced at the words.

before a dozen others, that I lied. I gave the lie back in his teeth, for I never took insult from mortal man. Then he struck me. I didn't think even for a moment that he was my superior officer; all that I knew was that I was struck—degraded by a blow. I measured him with my eye and felled him to my feet with a single stroke. Then I was seized—tried by a drumhead court-martial, and sentenced to be publicly whipped in presence of the whole army, and I was whipped, too. As the lashes fell upon my naked back, and cut long quivering lines in the yielding flesh, with every lash I swore a bitter oath of vengeance. Then, my punishment done—a whipped, degraded slave, a man no longer—they untied me. I sunk down at their feet almost helpless. They raised me up; I was covered with my own gore. This General Treveling—then only a colonel—looked on me, his victim, with a scornful smile—ten thousand curses on him! I was maddened with rage. I shook my fist defiantly in his face, and before all I said: 'Your quarters shall swim in blood for this!' I kept my word. I have shed white blood enough along the Ohio for me to swim in. My vengeance, too, against this man was fearful. I stole his eldest child—left it to die, in the forest. I tore his heart from his lashed had torn my back. And now, I strike him a second time!"

Murdock gazed at the rage-inflamed countenance of the dark-skinned man with a feeling akin to awe.

"It is a bargain, then, between us?" the young man said.

"Yes; to get another chance at him, I'd go through the fires of hell!" the other replied.



The scout was in a trap from which there was no escape.

RED ARROW,

THE WOLF DEMON;

OR,

The Queen of the Kanawha.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOY," "THE MAN FROM TEXAS," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPPA," "ACE OF SPADES," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SCHEME OF CLEMENT MURDOCK.

The stranger turned in no little surprise at being accosted by the young man.

"Did you speak to me, stranger?" he asked.

"Yes," answered Murdock; "I should like to have a few minutes' conversation with you if it is agreeable."

The stranger shot a rapid glance at the face of the young man, but he saw nothing therein to alarm him.

"Certainly," he replied, after thinking for a moment.

"This is my shanty," said Murdock, referring to the log-house before whose door they stood. "Come in; we can talk inside without being overheard."

There was a strange expression upon the face of the other. He cast a rapid glance around him, and laid his hand upon the handle of the hunting-knife at his girdle, as if he had half a mind to stab the young man—who was fumbling with the rude fastenings of the door—and then make a bold break for freedom and the woods. But the momentary glance around convinced him—that is, if he had such an idea—that to carry it out would be hopeless, for a dozen or more of the settlers were between him and the forest. So, with a muttered curse upon his ill-luck, he followed Murdock coolly.

"And in that case, you'll come in for the property?"

"Exactly."

"The plan ought to work," said Benton, thoughtfully.

"I don't see how it can fail. I want your assistance, and I've got a fellow in the station who will help me. You two will be enough to play Indian. It won't be much trouble and very little risk, and I'll pay well for it."

"But, suppose she refuses to marry you?"

"Then she won't escape from the hands of the red-skins, but they'll kill her," said Murdock coolly.

"And in that case, you'll come in for the property?"

"Exactly."

"The plan ought to work," said Benton, thoughtfully.

"Yes, blood will run like water," replied the stranger. "But what is the name of the girl that is to be carried off?"

"Virginia Treveling."

"No, but I'll raise such a blaze along the river, and strike such a blow that it shall be felt, even to Virginia!" cried the other, in a tone of fierce menace.

"It will be a bloody time," said Murdock, thoughtfully.

"Yes, blood will run like water," replied the stranger. "But what is the name of the girl that is to be carried off?"

"Virginia Treveling?"

"Do you expect to drive the whites from the Ohio?" asked Murdock.

"No, but I'll raise such a blaze along the river, and strike such a blow that it shall be felt, even to Virginia!" cried the other, in a tone of fierce menace.

"It will be a bloody time," said Murdock, thoughtfully.

"Yes, blood will run like water," replied the stranger. "But what is the name of the girl that is to be carried off?"

"Virginia Treveling."

"Do you expect to drive the whites from the Ohio?" asked Murdock.

"Yes."

"Well, I have never met a Mr. Benton," said Murdock.

"I was sure that you were in error when you said that you knew me," said the stranger, with an air of mystery.

"Not as Benton, but under another name, I have met you."

"Ah!" The hand of the stranger sought the handle of his knife. The movement was not unnoticed by the keen eye of Murdock.

"Don't be alarmed; I mean you no harm," he said, quickly. "If I had wished to denounce

And so the compact was made.

CHAPTER VIII.

BOONE IN A TIGHT PLACE.

EARNESTLY and with anxious faces the settlers discussed the chances of the coming war.

With one voice Colonel Boone was selected as the commander of the station.

Messengers were despatched to warn the neighboring settlements.

Then Boone, taking Kenton and Lark aside, suggested that they should make a scout into the Shawnee country and discover, if possible, against which settlement the Indian attack would be directed.

The suggestion suited well with the bold and daring spirit of the border, and both Kenton and Lark gladly expressed their willingness to accompany the skillful and daring woodman.

Boone gave Jackson a hint as to his intention, and then the three left the settlement

excursion to the ravine where she had been rescued from the bear by him.

Gladly Winthrop announced his willingness to accompany her.

So the two set out for the ravine.

They passed down through the station and took the trail leading up the Kanawha.

As they walked onward, chatting gaily together, they had no suspicion that they were closely followed by three men, who, holding consultation together on the edge of the timber, had noticed them as they passed.

Leaving the trail, the girl and the young man walked into the ravine.

The three men, who had followed him so closely, paused at the entrance to the gorge, apparently to consult together.

"The fellow is her lover, as I guessed," said the foremost of the three, the one who had been the most eager to follow the two.

"It looks like it," said the tallest of the two others, who was the dark-skinned stranger, who had called himself Benton. The third one of the party was a worthless fellow who hung about the station, ready to drink "corn-juice" when he could get it, and fit but for little else. He was known as Bob Tiersen.

"I'd give him a lead of buckshot if he came after my gal!" said Bob, who was somewhat given to boasting.

"Perhaps I may," replied Murdock, who was the leader of the party. He spoke with an angry voice, and a lowering cloud was upon his sallow face.

"If the young fellow was out of the way, this would be a good opportunity to try the Indian's game," said Benton, suggestively.

"It was me, I'd put him out of the way mighty doggomed quick!" exclaimed Bob, who seldom lost an opportunity of telling what he would do.

"For the first time in your life, Bob, you've said a wise thing," said Murdock.

"For the first time!" cried Bob, in indignation. "Wal, I reckon now, I don't take a back seat to any man in the station—

"In drinking whisky? No, you don't, to do you justice," said Murdock, sarcastically. "But, Benton, can you fit up for the Indian now?"

"Yes, easily enough," replied the one addressed. "I've got the pigment to paint our faces in my pouch. Just lend me my hunting shirt, and take my coat."

"How about your hair?"

"Tie a handkerchief over it, nigger-fashion," suggested Bob.

"Yes, that will do," said Murdock. "The girl will be so frightened that she won't be apt to notice you much. Tie a handkerchief over her eyes the moment you grab her."

"And the young feller?" asked Bob.

"Leave him to me," said Murdock, tapped the butt of his rifle significantly.

"And you'll leave him to the wolves, eh?" said Bob, with a grin.

"I shouldn't wonder," replied Murdock, dryly.

"But the report of the rifle—if it should be heard at the station—"

"A hunter after game, that's all," said Murdock. "But come, let's tree our game; I have an idea that there'll be a love-scene between the two up the ravine, and I'd like to be a looker-on." Murdock ground his teeth at the very thought.

So, cautiously and slowly, the three left the little trail by the banks of the Kanawha, and followed in the footsteps of Virginia and Winthrop the ravine.

The girl and the young man reached the spot where the encounter with the bear had taken place, and there they halted.

The quick eye of the girl caught sight of the drops of blood dried upon the rock, where the bear had fallen and died.

"See," she said, pointing to the spots upon the rock; "but for you my blood would have stained the stone instead of the brute's."

"And but for that strange girl who came so aptly to my rescue, my blood might have been there, too," said Winthrop.

"It was a moment of terrible peril," and Virginia half-shuddered at the bare remembrance.

"Yes; but it was evidently not your fate to die by the claws and teeth of the bear."

"What will my fate be?" said the girl, reflectively.

"A bright and happy one, I hope," replied Winthrop. "I am sure that you deserve none other."

"Ah!" said the girl; "but we do not get our deservings in this world." As she spoke she sat down upon a rock that dropped out of the ground and looked up into the face of the young man with her clear, bright eyes. In his heart Winthrop thought that he had never seen such clear, innocent eyes before.

"You should get yours," replied Winthrop, "or else there isn't any justice in this world."

"I hope so," said Virginia, half-sadly.

"How beautiful the forest is!" said the young man, glancing around him; but in his heart he thought the fair girl at his side was far more beautiful than any of her surroundings.

"How do you like our home by the banks of the Ohio?" asked Virginia.

"So well that I think the rest of my life will be spent in yonder settlement," replied Winthrop, quickly.

"Oh, I am so glad of that!" The tone of the girl showed that the words came directly from her heart. A warm flush came over the face of the young man as the words fell upon his ears.

"I am glad to hear you say that!" The earnest tone of Winthrop told the girl that her suspicion was truth. She was loved.

"You are," murmured Virginia, in a low tone. She felt that the words she wished to hear—for she loved the man that had risked his life so nobly—would soon be spoken.

"Yes, I am; can you guess why?" The voice of Winthrop trembled as he spoke.

Virginia glanced up shyly in the face of the young man, then dropped her eyes to the earth again. She did not answer.

Encouraged by her silence, Winthrop spoke:

"Virginia, I have known you but a few days, but I feel as if I had known you all my life. I have never met any one in the world that I have liked as I do you—that I love as I do you; for, Virginia, I love you with all my whole heart."

Virginia hung her head; her glances shily swept the ground. She did not reply.

"You are not offended at my words, Virginia?" he said, earnestly.

"No—no," she replied, slowly, looking up in his face with a half-smile.

Winthrop guessed the truth in the soft eyes that looked so lovingly into his own.

"Virginia, may I hope that some day you will return to love me?" Winthrop asked, with eager hope patent in his voice.

Virginia glanced up shyly in the face of the young man, then dropped her eyes to the earth again.

She did not answer.

"Mr. Morton, have all but one of the boats in readiness with their crews thoroughly armed," ordered Captain Rowdon; and then, turning to his brother and himself, he invited us to accompany him in his own cutter.

Taking the lead in the cutter, Lord Rowdon directed the way, and in a shore while we rounded the same point of land which the schooner had, the day before, and in a moment came in sight of the little bay into which the frigate had crept.

On the flood of joy that came over the young man when he discovered that the love that he wished so to gain was all his own. That the heart now beating so fondly against his breast was devoted to him, and to him alone.

On the flood of joy that came over the young man when he discovered that the love that he wished so to gain was all his own. That the heart now beating so fondly against his breast was devoted to him, and to him alone.

"Virginia, you do love me, then?" he asked.

"Yes," she murmured, softly.

"You will be my wife?"

"Yes."

"You will be mine, then, forever and forever?"

The young man gently raised the little head that nestled so snugly on his breast. Virginia understood the movement, and anticipated the wish of her lover. With a shy smile upon her face, and a coy look in her dark-brown eyes, she gave her lips up to her lover's caresses.

The lips of the lovers met in a long, lingering kiss—the first proof of love, so dear to all hearts. Lip to lip and soul to soul.

Virginia Treveling gave herself to Harvey Winthrop.

A moment only the lovers remained in each other's arms.

Then the sharp crack of a rifle broke the stillness of the summer air.

With a groan of anguish Winthrop reeled from the fond embrace of the young girl. He clutched wildly at the air, and then fell heavily on his side upon the rocky surface.

With a shriek of terror Virginia knelt by the side of her lover.

The shriek of the young girl was answered by the shrill war-whoop of the Indian.

From their covert in the thicket sprang two painted braves, and rushed with eager haste toward the young girl.

Virginia did not try to fly. Her senses were chilled to numbness by the fall of the man who had a moment before had pressed the warm love-kiss upon her willing lips.

Eagerly the two that came from the thicket seized the girl. With a moan of anguish she fell fainting into their arms.

The bird was in the net.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 190.)

Tradillo, the Corsair.

BY COLONEL PRENTISS INGRAM.

One pleasant day some years ago, I joined a party, bound on an expedition, or cruise, along the shores of Australia, where we intended seeking a haven now and then for the purpose of a hunt on shore.

We embarked in a good sailing schooner of a build closely resembling a yacht, and having been refitted to our taste, she made a most comfortable craft, fully capable of accommodating our crew of seven, and pleasure-seekers, who all told, numbered fifteen.

Over a smooth sea and aided by a fire-knot breeze, we sailed merrily along for some twenty-four hours, and then put into a small bay and pitched our tents and commenced arrangements for a grand hunt.

The morning thus passed, and with great success, for game in abundance lay before our tents, and with eager appetites we were preparing to sit down to a substantial dinner, when word came to us from the schooner that a strange-looking vessel was hovering off the coast, and it was supposed, was intending to come into our bay.

Instantly all was commotion, and anxiously we sought a spot from whence we could view the intruder, and discovered one of those peculiarly constructed, but swift-sailing vessels common in Chinese waters, and used formerly and now, it may be, for pirate craft by the Mandarins.

"Yonder vessel is certainly a pirate; and see, I am right, for yonder floats the flag of Tradillo, the Corsair."

The speaker was Lord Ingersoll, Rowdon, and a gentleman whom we all knew had been a most extensive traveler over the world; for the past ten years he had spent visiting all parts of the Eastern land.

A smooth gentle, seemingly fifty years of age, and generous and noble-hearted, though reserved and rather melancholy, Lord Rowdon was most popular, and between the Englishman and myself, particularly, there had sprung up a more than friendly regard.

"Yes; but it was evidently not your fate to die by the claws and teeth of the bear."

"What will my fate be?" said the girl, reflectively.

"A bright and happy one, I hope," replied Winthrop. "I am sure that you deserve none other."

"Ah!" said the girl; "but we do not get our deservings in this world." As she spoke she sat down upon a rock that dropped out of the ground and looked up into the face of the young man with her clear, bright eyes. In his heart Winthrop thought that he had never seen such clear, innocent eyes before.

"You should get yours," replied Winthrop, "or else there isn't any justice in this world."

"I hope so," said Virginia, half-sadly.

"How beautiful the forest is!" said the young man, glancing around him; but in his heart he thought the fair girl at his side was far more beautiful than any of her surroundings.

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"You should get yours," replied Winthrop, "or else there isn't any justice in this world."

THE SATURDAY STAR JOURNAL.

"Oh, go to thunder!" cried Texas, rising in contempt. "See here, now; this has gone jest about far enough. You may be able to play this on the niggers, but you can't on me. I'll give you just five minutes to get out of this shanty, or I'll just go in and clean out the whole lot of you, though I haven't got a weapon. I can stand a joke as well as most men but this is a little too much for good nature."

The Ku Kluxers understood at once the mistake that the overseer was laboring under. He had taken the whole affair to be a practical joke.

"Ozark, show yourself," commanded the chief; "convince the stranger that we are in dead earnest."

The second one of the masked men removed the covering from his face and revealed the features of the outlaw.

Texas was astonished. He knew Ozark by reputation, and recognized him at once from the description given of him.

"I'm Yell Ozark, I am," growled the outlaw; "mebbe you've heard of me!"

"This is no joke; we mean business every time," cried the Ku Klux leader, sternly. "We give you twenty-four hours' warning to leave this place—this country. If you are found within the limits of Franklin after that time, may the Lord have mercy on your soul."

"Why do you order me away?" Texas demanded, considerably mystified by these strange proceedings.

"That is our business," returned the masked man, sternly.

"I haven't trod on anybody's toes since I've been here that I'm aware of," Texas expostulated.

"Seek not to question, but obey," said the masked man.

"I'll see you in the bottomless pit first!" replied the overseer, with uncommon energy.

The masked men started in surprise. "You refuse to go?" cried the Ku Klux leader, in a tone of menace.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

UNFORTUNATE MISS BUTTERFLY.

MISSOURI, extended upon her bed with her face buried in the pillow, sobbing as if her heart would break, heard the sound of Sam's horse's hoofs as he galloped up and then rode away again; then she heard the overseer descend the creaking steps and the low rumble of the wagon as it passed by the house on its way to the store-room.

It was probably a quarter of an hour, at least, before Missouri recovered her composure. Then she rose from the bed, lighted a candle and sat down by the window to meditate.

Long and thoughtfully she reflected upon what had passed between her and the overseer.

"I suppose that I acted like a silly child, and that he won't have the best opinion in the world of me," she murmured; "but I couldn't help it. I knew that he was making believe, and I couldn't have helped telling him I knew it, if I had died for it."

Then she looked out of the window over the fields toward the store-house, as if she expected that her eyes would pierce alike the gloom of the night and the wall of the log-cabin, and so reveal to her sight the form of the overseer.

Five or ten minutes she had sat in deep meditation by the window, when she heard a low scratching on the door. That was Butterfly's knock, and a moment after the door opened and the young negro girl came in, looking frightened half to death.

"What's the matter, Butterfly? Your eyes are as big as saucers!"

"Oh, bress de Lord, missy, dey's come!" exclaimed the girl, sinking on her knees in an agony of terror.

Missouri rose from her seat in wonder. She saw at once that something very unusual must have occurred to produce such a state of terror, for Butterfly was quite courageous by nature.

"What's the matter, Butterfly? Can't you tell me—what has come?"

"Oh! we's all gwine to be killed!" and then the girl commenced to rock herself to and fro and to howl dismally.

"Brotherhood of the South!" exclaimed the overseer, in contempt; "that's a lie! You're a set of scallywags, the whole lot of you; a band of mean, cowardly cut-throats that take advantage of the darkness and a disguise to satisfy private and personal grudges. No true man, north or south, will hide his face behind a mask and stab his enemy without giving him a chance for his life. You're a cowardly set of miserable, sneaking cowards! Fire, and be hanged to you! You've got arms and are four to one, but if you don't kill me first fire, I'll strangle one or two of you before I get through."

"Stop your crying at once, Butterfly!" exclaimed Missouri, firmly but kindly. "Tell me what you have seen. Is it something on the stairs or in your room?"

"Oh, no, missy," the girl sobbed. "Oh, 'fore de Lord, save us poor sinners! Dey's out, missy," and then the girl pointed through the open window toward the stables and storehouse.

Missouri's heart gave a great leap and for a moment she felt a choking sensation in her throat.

She darted at the girl and seizing her by the shoulder, raised her bodily from the floor.

"Tell me instantly what you have seen and where!" she exclaimed, excitedly, and in her nervous agitation she gave the unfortunate Butterfly a good shaking which had the effect of bringing her partially to her senses.

"Dey's all out dere by the store-house an' in de store-house wid Massa Texas. I was comin' from aunty Dinah's house an' I see'd 'em wid my own two lookin' eyes!" the girl howled.

"Saw who?" exclaimed Missouri, almost in despair of ever getting any information from the terrified girl.

"Here they are, father, in the store-house. Then followed the hoarse voice of the violent Sam.

"First company forward by de flank; second battalion take 'em in de rear! Ready—fire!"

Then came a scattering volley of shots, followed by a yell that rung in the ears of the masked men like the knell of impending doom.

The unceremonious way in which the Ku Klux band left that store-house and got upon their horses and flew, fully proved that retreating was their "best bolt"—to use the "Western."

The raising of the siege was performed so quickly that even the overseer was taken by surprise.

"Another yell, more powerful than the first, came from the lips of Sam and his 'army,' as they beheld the sudden flight of the Black Riders.

And as for the members of the Ku Klux band, they were firmly convinced that old General Smith had armed all the negroes on the plantation and had planned a deliberate attack for the purpose of capturing the whole party.

"You infernal fools!" growled the leader of the band—who was no other than Will Fayette—enraged that he had yielded to sudden fear and allowed himself to be carried away by the headlong rush of the rest; "why didn't you stand? It was only Smith and the negroes, and they won't fight."

"They'll fight like blue blazes, sometimes," exclaimed Ozark, in reply; "don't you remember the fight at Jenkins' Ferry, or the battle of the Saline, as the Yanks call it? The nigs fought like devils that. Fingar or Kirby Smith can tell you all 'bout that. Ef it hadn't been for the drashin' that we got, we would have taken Little Rock an' the hul of Steele's."

Then she thought of Sam; she knew that he had served in the Union army, and having smelt powder on the field of battle, would not be so apt to give way to the Ku Klux fear.

"Butterfly, will you go over to the side and tell Sam that I want him?" she said.

"Ded, missy, I don't dar' fur to stir out o' de house," the negress moaned.

"Why not?" demanded Missouri, impatiently.

"I'se afraid of dem black debils!" and then Butterfly commenced to howl again.

"Stop your noise!" cried Missouri, imperiously; "you goose! they are not at the stable, but back at the store-house."

"Ded, missy, dey's all ober. Ef I was to give you just five minutes to get out of this shanty, or I'll just go in and clean out the whole lot of you, though I haven't got a weapon. I can stand a joke as well as most men but this is a little too much for good nature."

Then Missouri's mind came the thought that, while superintending the arranging of the overseer's room that morning, she had seen his revolvers lying in the top drawer of the bureau.

"Oh, Heaven!" she murmured; "he is unarmed and in their hands!" Then a sudden idea came into her head. "With the revolvers, Sam and I might be able to frighten them away."

Soing the candle, she advanced to the door.

Butterfly jumped to her feet in grotesque alarm.

"Oh, whar is you gwine, missy?" she faltered.

"To get Sam and try to rescue the overseer," promptly answered the planter's daughter.

"Take me wid you, missy!" Butterfly howled; "dem brack debils will come an' git me if I stay here alone!" And she trembled as if stricken with the ague.

Missouri had only waited to catch sight of the overseer, and to assure herself that he was unharmed; then had taken advantage of the darkness to return to the house.

"Ded I'll cry out and make a noise!" asserted her mistress.

"Ded I won't, missy. I'll be jes' as still as ded," the negress replied, earnestly.

"Come then; but remember if you make a noise I shall let them take you."

Missouri had reflected that, though Butterfly could not be counted upon to take an active part in the rescue, yet she could howl enough for a dozen and therefore would be a valuable acquisition, as the masked men would imagine that they were assailed by a whole regiment of blacks upon hearing her cries.

Missouri proceeded at once to the overseer's room. As she had expected, the two overseers were in the drawer. Securing them she perceived that every chamber was loaded.

Then, followed by Butterfly, who was trembling in every limb with terror, and therefore kept close to the heels of her mistress, Missouri went at once to the stable.

As usual, Sam had a choice collection of familiar spirits with him.

Missouri called him out and briefly explained the situation to him.

Sam's military ardor was inflamed in a minute.

"By golly, I ain't afraid of dem rascals!" he exclaimed. "I fit 'em when I was in da army, an' they can't skeer me 'kase dey's got dar faces kivered up. I've got my musket inside an' dar's five or six good boys in dar fur to help us; dey kin yell, if dey can't fight. I jes' tell 'em dat dere's some chicken-thieves down 'round de storehouse, an' I won't say nuffin' bout dem brack riders, 'kase dat will skeer 'em. You see, missy, dey ain't fit fur Uncle Sam, like I have."

Then Sam went inside, got his musket and assembled his followers.

Five minutes after the "army" was on its way to rescue the overseer.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

AN EASY VICTORY.

"REFUSE to go?" exclaimed Texas, repeating the words of the masked man; "of course I refuse! I don't acknowledge your right to order me away. What have I done to you or to any of the people of this country? You ought to consider me a good Southern-rights man, for I have whaled a sarey nigger like thundersince I've been here."

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CHAPTER XXXIX.

A FASHIONABLE GIRL'S LOVE LETTER.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

Your face from my fond vision can not pass,
'Tis e'er before me like the looking-glass.
If I could! ever cease in you to trust,
My hopes would trail like my dress in the dust.
My thoughts of you, which tongue can never speak,
Deepen the rōuge upon my conscious cheek.
The fear that you might cease to think me fair
Does pain me like these garter which I wear.
And when at night I rest me from my cares,
I think of you, though I forget my prayers.
And when your voice upon my spirit steals,
It seems quite lifted up upon high heels.
'Twould startle me to hear your love had ranged,
As much as 'twould to hear the styles had changed.
Yea, if another maiden pleased your sight,
My cheek would show an extra lily-white.
How sweet it is to hear you tell your love,
And squeeze my hand just like this narrow glove!
I wait as fondly for your coming, dear,
As for the newest fashions to appear.
My tender love for you will alter not,
And will not fade like the last dress I bought.
My heart, in spite of narrow corsets, grows
Fonder of you as every moment goes.
I'll ne'er forget you till the day I die,
You are the only beau I'd like to tie.
And if you wish me, love, to be your bride,
I must begin my colors to decide.
Whether pale blue, with bounces, trimmed with
flowers,
Or simple white, would suit a love like ours.
But anyway I'll trust in you, dear sir,
As fondly as I'd trust my milliner.
And so good-night, sweet dreams, I'll dream of you,
And that nice suit I saw at Stewart's too.

DICK DARLING,
The Pony Express-Rider.
A CALIFORNIA STORY.

BY LAUNCE POYNTZ.

III.

"Now, Marse Dick," said Tom Nelson, as the mail-carrier and he sat at opposite sides of a little fire, in the Twelfth Infantry camp, a night or two after the murder of General Canby; "dis yer war ain't gwing to be got over so quick as dem folkses in Yreka t'inks. It's berry well fo' General Gillem to gib big order, 'sterminate eberry cussed Modoc,' but tain't so easy to do the 'sterminating dem fellers, Marse Dick. Now why for should you and I be losin' 'ronn' here, when we mout be out wid Missy Charlotte at Fairfields, whar we is allers welcome, you know, Marse Dick. De season is gwing, and de corn and taters is not in, and dough fitin's mighty pooty work fo' leetle time, it get mighty tiresome to dis nigger."

Dick Darling laughed.
"If you're tired, you can go home, Tom. For my part, I volunteered to carry the mails during this business, and I don't intend to give up, till Captain Jack and all his pals are ironed in pairs."

"But den, what Missy Charlotte do?" asked Tom, shrewdly. He knew the right road to influence Darling. The young mail-carrier's face changed.

"What of her?" he asked. "I must do my duty without regard to her, and perform my agreement with the Government."

"But Missy Charlotte she send word by me, she want see Marse Dick, berry particlär," said Tom, stoutly.

"Did she say that?" asked Dick, eagerly.

"Yes, Marse Dick," replied the darky, unblushingly; which was a tremendous lie on his part, and he knew it. But Tom was too anxious to get home, to hesitate at a falsehood, more or less, if it only secured his end.

The young mail-carrier mused a few minutes.

"Tom, I must certainly go see her," he said, in a low voice, "if I have to get leave."

"No need of dat, Marse Dick," said Tom, shrewdly. "No need let eberrybody in camp know your business. You an' me is gwing to Yreka to-morrer. Let's go roun' by Fairfield's ranch, an' pay our respects."

"A good idea, Tom. We'll do it. Time to go to sleep. Good-night."

When the first faint streaks of dawn were brightening in the east, Dick Darling and Tom Nelson were in the saddle, and riding slowly and cautiously out of the Lava Beds. So broken was the country, and so favorable for ambushes, that the young mail-carrier was compelled to take a different route every day, to escape assassination.

In the faint, dubious light, they struck down a narrow canon, which led them out on the plain in safety, just as the light became plain.

Dick Darling breathed freer when he came out on the open prairie. Bold as he was, there was something in the nature of the Modoc war, so horrible and bloodthirsty, something so goomly and repulsive in those black Lava Beds, that it weighed upon the youth's senses like a nightmare.

"Come along, Tom," he cried, when they were at last on the prairie; "if we expect to reach Yreka by way of Fairfield's ranch, we'll have to stir round pretty lively."

And the two comrades, white and black, stretched rapidly off to the westward, in the direction of Fairfield's ranch. Not sign of a Modoc was to be seen, and in three hours from the time they left camp, the huge live-oak that sheltered the gate of the ranch appeared in sight.

The hound Hector accompanied them; for since that faithful creature had twice saved his master's life, by giving intelligence of approaching danger, Darling had consented to Tom's taking him along. Now, suddenly, the dog gave a furious bay, and darted forward toward the ranch at such lightning speed that he left the riders far behind.

"Marse Dick, dar's an Injin sneakin' round de ranch," said Tom, eagerly. "I know's dat dog's ways. Let's ride like sixty."

And away went the comrades toward the ranch at full gallop, following the dog, who ran straight as an arrow toward the great live-oak tree that grew near the ranch gate, baying loudly all the time.

Then they heard a great disturbance in the ranch, and out came old Fairfield, rifle in hand, roused by the dog. They saw him raise his rifle to his shoulder; and then, like a flash, out darted an Indian on foot from under the great tree, and ran like a deer across the prairie toward a clump of cottonwood a little way off. But that Indian was not destined to escape. The old agent leveled his rifle with cool deliberation, and they saw a little puff of white smoke. The savage threw up his arms and fell dead with a shriek, just as the two daughters of Fairfield came running out of the gate, each bearing a rifle, in the style of true border heroines.

As the comrades galloped up, there was a scream of joyful recognition, and then Dick Darling was off his horse, and Charlotte Fairfield was in his arms. Tom Nelson rode round the ranch in company with old Fairfield to ascertain if any more Indians were concealed

near by, but none were found. The old rancher returned on foot to the gate, while Tom took a wider circuit through the prairie on the look-out for signs of any kind. The slain Indian proved to be a Klamath, as they supposed, and the fact made Tom very uneasy, as it showed that the Klamaths must be growing bold from the impunity of the Modocs.

When he came back toward the tree, he felt sober and thoughtful, but the sight he beheld there was enough to cheer up a hermit in Lent. Charlotte and Dick were standing under the great live-oak with their hands clasped in each other's, while the girl appeared to be earnestly warning Dick not to expose himself to peril for her sake. But Tom started with surprise as he looked to the rear of the lovers; for there stood Sophy Fairfield, regarding them both with a gloomy, lowering brow.

Her father stood near her, watching them with grave expression, and not seeing the expression of his youngest daughter's face. But Tom did; and the shrewd darky understood the situation at a glance.

"Golly, dat light-haired gal as jealous of de dark one as she can be," he muttered. "Dey've both been pullin' caps for Marse Dick, and de dark one's got him. Golly, but I'se glad tain't my gal she's a-glowerin' at. She look as if she like to pisen her."

Here Dick called to him, laughingly:

"Tom, you've been lying to me, you rascal. You said that Miss Charlotte wanted to see me."

"An' I guess as how she did, boss," was the grinning reply; "leastwise it look uncommon like it jes now. I neber tells no lie, Marse Dick."

"But you told me she gave you a message, and she never did."

"Well, well, Dick, we might as well forgive him," said Charlotte, smiling; "for he brought you to me when I least expected you, and brought Hector, too, the good old dog, who saved us all from being murdered perhaps, for that Indian must have been only a spy from a larger body."

"And Ise t'inkin', Missy Charlotte," said Tom, gravely, "dat we'll have to be gititin' out of dis hyar of dem fellers is roun', or we won't

Then through the leadlike clouds and the screaming gale a huge raven winged his flight.

At a single glance the Norway queen recognized the ill-omened bird. It was the spirit of the ancient war-god, that in the olden time had fluttered his wings over the battle-field when the fierce northern warriors had carried dismay and death to the southern lands.

"Save me, oh, Heaven!" moaned the helpless woman, as she knelt upon the galley's deck and lifted her streaming eyes to the angry clouds above, but the whistle of the wind and the splash of the sea were the only answer to her prayer.

Then through the leadlike clouds and the screaming gale a huge raven winged his flight.

Upon the mast of the little galley the raven perched. He folded his wings and glared with his piercing eyes upon the helpless woman beneath.

"Oh, fair dame," the raven cried, "thy Christians can not save thee now. The man clings to the keel of thy vessel, and the misty caverns of the deep raise high the spell that vexes the waves and rouses the demons of the blast. Thy husband, bold Red Rollo, prayed to me when on the seas his bark felt the tempest's power, and my might brought him safe again to land."

"And wilt thou not save me?" the unhappy queen questioned, in her dire extremity.

"On one condition," quoth the raven, fluttering his sable wings.

"And the condition?"

And when the long vigil was over, and the anxious mother prayed to know the doom foretold by the planets above, the monk made answer slow and solemn:

"No harm can the raven do to the Norway prince either on sea or land."

Then beat the mother's heart with joy, for she knew that by the aid of the sage monk she had learned the truth.

"If the raven was powerless for evil on both rolling water and solid land, where else then could he harm the heir to Norway's throne?" she cried in glee.

Years passed; young Sir John grew to man's estate, the very image of his father, the famous Norwegian warrior. The sable wings of the raven flapped not over the towers of the palace, and the queen had long since ceased to trouble her mind with thoughts of the obscure bird. She trusted that the foolish promise would never be fulfilled.

When Sir John was one-and-twenty, a fierce storm drove on the Norway coast the vessel wherein was embarked beauteous Edith, daughter of Scotland's king.

The Norway queen gave fitting reception to the fair maiden, and in her old palace harbored her, while her train upon the shore repaired the damaged vessel.

Thrown thus into close communion, was it any wonder that the Norway prince soon learned to love the Scottish maiden, or that she returned his passion?

The ship was finished, and gentle Edith sailed away, bearing Sir John's pledge that within a year and a day he would follow her to Scotland and claim her from her royal father.

But scarcely three months went by before the young prince decided that a year was far too long to wait. He must to Scotland at once, and claim his bride.

The queen listened to his prayer, and then as she granted it in her heart came a warning of danger. She thought of the raven, and the promise that she had given years before.

To the young prince she related the story, and warned him to beware of the raven's power.

But he, young, brave and heedless, laughed and asked, if not on sea or land, where then could danger find him?

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The Norway queen gave fitting reception to the fair maiden, and in her old palace harbored her, while her train upon the shore repaired the damaged vessel.

Thrown thus into close communion, was it any wonder that the Norway prince soon learned to love the Scottish maiden, or that she returned his passion?

The ship was finished, and gentle Edith sailed away, bearing Sir John's pledge that within a year and a day he would follow her to Scotland and claim her from her royal father.

But scarcely three months went by before the young prince decided that a year was far too long to wait. He must to Scotland at once, and claim his bride.

The queen listened to his prayer, and then as she granted it in her heart came a warning of danger. She thought of the raven, and the promise that she had given years before.

To the young prince she related the story, and warned him to beware of the raven's power.